241
262 are no ready markets.

Sesame seed (Sesamum indicum) called "selit", is rather rare, and, as the name indicates, not originally native to Abyssinia. The Amhara, finding it difficult to grow, consider it an expensive and delicious delicacy, and consume the oil only as a rare treat.

Sunflower seed (Heliantus annuus), called "suf" is not a field crop, only occasionally planted, often semi-wild.

244 Vegetables are considered garden crops, and are planted near the hamlet on the hillside, while field crops are in the valley and river flood plains. Apart from kitchen gardens, which are considered necessities because of the spices that are consumed daily, other vegetables, particularly cabbage (gomän) are despised as poor food (food of p poor people or in times of famine). Consequently the Amhara raises few vegetables and small quantities.

Cabbage (gomän), and a white variety, "aydärgē", resistant to climatic change.

252 Chick-Peas, "shembera" (Cicer arietum), the most common, generally eaten roasted, but also boiled in the lenten season, and baked into bread to stretch tyeff in case of crop failure. Shembera is the proverbial staple, even in war and famine, never expected to fail. The proverb says:

244
539 "She who has not born, will never carry her load;

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[539]

(but a fallow) shembera (field) will bear (next year)".

meaning that a barren woman will never carry a child in womb, but a shembera field will bear again and again. The Amhara realizes that this legume improves the soil. It will grow in poor soil, resist drought. The harvest is late, usually February.

Peas, called "atär" are also grown in quantity, for similar reasons: they grow well in poor soil, and are especially important in lent.

"meser" The collective term for lentils.

Broad bean, "baqella" also grows in poor and eroded soil, and is much planted. It is then roasted, or boiled, or mixed in curry (wot).

[252]

Onions and garlic, the latter called "white onion" are grown in kitchen gardens as ingredients of wot.

Grey bean called "adängwarē", planted at beginning of heavy rains as fenced-in garden crop, eaten raw, considered semi-wild, and not prestige food.

Gourds, "qēl", e.g. "dubba", pumpkin-type (Cucurbita maxima), are grown inside hamlets and boiled and cut into strips in wot (curry-type stew). Some gourds are planted in dug holes, others grow on vines to the height of roofs, on which they rest for support.

Roots, similar to potatoes, called "dennech" are grown in Shoa, but are of minor importance

244 in northern Abyssinia.

[263] bärbärē is the generic name for the red spicy pepper, a major ingredient of wot, and the most important item in the kitchen garden. The strongest kind is called "mitmitta" or "sätita" and because it is grown in Begemdir it is often called "Gondar bärbärey". The smaller the pod, the stronger the pepper.

Gesho, the leaf used as fermenting agent in beer and mead, grows on a bush which is a garden crop.

Ades, another leafy garden crop is grown in a wind-

[302] protected area, fenced in; used to purify butter in boiling, especially for use in women's hairdo, for they believe the odor of it is irresistible to men.

Gwaya, a major forage crop of the legume family, is grown as scarcity fodder but contact with it is believed dangerous to humans.

245 Lemons, very small, are grown in a scattered fashion, the only fruit so raised.

Viticulture is a riddle. Grape growing is not in evidence any more among Amhara peasants, but there are local traditions that up to a century ago grapes were grown, e.g. in the worāda (district) of "yäkämkäm qaroda", east of Lake Tana. The name "woyna dega" is derived from the wine-growing, intermediate level of topography. It may have been imported by the Portuguese, or may have been much older. Nowadays